

REMARKS

Claims 1-11 remain in this application. Claims 1-11 are rejected. Claims 1, 3, 9 and 11 are amended to clarify the invention.

Applicant herein traverses and respectfully requests reconsideration of the rejection of the claims cited in the final Office Action mailed May 21, 2004.

Claims 1, 4, 5 and 9-11 are rejected as obvious over Darrow (US 2,026,082) in view of Hasbro Interactive under 35 U.S.C. §103(a). The applicant herein respectfully traverses this rejection. For a rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) to be sustained, the differences between the features of the combined references and the present invention must be obvious to one skilled in the art.

In reading the Examiner's reasoning in rejecting the claims, it would appear that the claimed term "peculiar value" is not being given its proper meaning as supported by the disclosure, and is instead being interpreted merely as being a value which locates a particular exact location of a character on the board during the course of play. In the context of the claims, the "peculiar value," as described in, and supported by, the specification, for example, at pages 11-12, by way of a simple example, is a value which is "controlled" as a function of "Event Points" for unique event production characters (with whom the player character is to interact) associated with a given square, and when the "peculiar value" for a particular one of the event production characters satisfies a particular criterion, such as for example, when it

exceeds a predetermined value, as in the example of Fig. 1b described at page 12, lines 2-13, only then does an event production square, involving the event production character with whom the peculiar value is associated, materialize along the route.

With this understanding, it is clear that the claim recitations, reproduced below, require a two step procedure:

controlling a peculiar value relating to event
production corresponding to the attributes of the
squares based on a stop position of the character;
controlling whether at least one event
production square emerges visibly or not on the route
based on the peculiar value

It is respectfully submitted that no such two step process is disclosed in the cited combination of references. In contrast, all of the event production squares (i.e., squares which can potentially produce production events) in Darrow (and as modified by Hasbro Interactive) have already been displayed on the screen since the game start (see FIG. 1). For example, when a player wants to make the event "Community Chest" occur in the game according to Darrow, the player must simply make his character stop on the square corresponding to "Community Chest" (a square indicated "No.7" of FIG. 1), the position of which on the game board has been

predetermined. The existence and position of such square does not change at any time, according to the cited references. However, according to the present invention, two steps are required to make a particular production event happen. At the first step, as no event production square (i.e., a square even capable of producing a production event) is yet displayed on the route, the player must make the event production square corresponding to an event (for example one analogous with "Community Chest") appear on the route. The materialization of this event production square, is achieved only when a condition is satisfied, for example, the cumulative peculiar value, obtained by adding the unique Event Points values corresponding to squares his/her character has previously stopped on, reaches the requisite predetermined value. Only after the event production square visibly emerges, can the second step be carried out. In the second step, if the player can make his character stop on the displayed event production square, the event (for example, one analogous to "Community Chest") is produced.

By virtue of the claimed feature, a player can control whether or not the event production square is made to visibly appear on the route and enjoy the game in order to satisfy the condition for the event production square to appear. Moreover, as the player must then additionally make his character stop on proper squares for causing visible display of the event production square, as well as for subsequently producing the event, there are more chances that player's skill is required in the present

invention than in accordance with Darrow and Hasbro Interactive. Therefore, the present invention can provide a more enjoyable and skillful game.

Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the rejected claims are not obvious in view of the cited references for the reasons stated above. Reconsideration of the rejections of claims 1, 4, 5 and 9-11 and their allowance are respectfully requested.

Claims 2, 3, 6/1, 6/2, 6/3, 6/4 and 6/5 are rejected as obvious over Darrow (US 2,026,082) in view of Hasbro Interactive in further view of Oshima et al. (US 5,601,487) under 35 U.S.C. §103(a). Claims 7/6/1, 7/6/2, 7/6/3, 7/6/4 and 7/6/5 are rejected as obvious over Darrow (US 2,026,082) in view of Hasbro Interactive in further view of Oshima et al. (US 5,601,487) and Stamper et al. (US 5,267,734) under 35 U.S.C. §103(a). Claims 8/6/1, 8/6/2, 8/6/3, 8/6/4 and 8/6/5 are rejected as obvious over Darrow (US 2,026,082) in view of Hasbro Interactive in further view of Oshima et al. (US 5,601,487) under 35 U.S.C. §103(a). The applicant herein respectfully traverses these rejections.

As noted above, the invention according to independent claims 1 and 3, from which these rejected claims depend, whether or not at least one event production square visibly emerges on the route is controlled based on a peculiar value relating to event production corresponding to the attributes of the squares based on a stop position of the character. Applicants respectfully submit that neither Oshima et al. nor Stamper et al. provide such disclosure that is lacking in both Darrow and Hasbro Interactive, as discussed above, and as clarified by the present claim amendments.

Therefore, the rejected dependent claims derive patentability at least in part from claims 1 and 3 from which they depend, as well as from the additional recitations they contain.

Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the rejected claims are not obvious in view of the cited references for the reasons stated above. Reconsideration of the rejections of claims 2, 3, 6/1, 6/2, 6/4, 6/5, 7/6/1, 7/6/2, 7/6/3, 7/6/4, 7/6/5, 8/6/1, 8/6/2, 8/6/3, 8/6/4 and 8/6/5 and their allowance are respectfully requested.

A Request for Continued Examination under 37 CFR 1.114 is being filed concurrently herewith, and in which this Applicants have requested a two (2) month extension of time.

In light of the foregoing, the application is now believed to be in proper form for allowance of all claims and notice to that effect is earnestly solicited. Please charge any deficiency or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 10-1250.

Respectfully submitted,
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